

HIV/AIDS:

INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL & OTHER DRUGS

GRADE 7, LESSON #22

Time Needed

50 minutes

Student Learning Objectives

The student will be able to ...

1. Describe the physical and emotional effects of alcohol and other drugs on the body.
2. Recognize that drugs (including alcohol) impair a person's ability to make decisions.
3. Explain that poor decisions about drugs and sexual behavior can put a person at increased risk for HIV.
4. List at least three reasons why some teens use drugs and healthier, less dangerous alternatives for meeting these needs.

Agenda

1. Set the stage by brainstorming the physical and emotional effects of alcohol and other drugs on the body. (7 minutes)
2. Discuss the impact of alcohol and other drugs on decision-making and on HIV risk. (5 minutes)
3. Analyze an advertisement, focusing on the use of alcohol to meet social and emotional needs. (5 minutes)
4. Generate a list of healthy, less dangerous alternatives to meeting these needs. (5 minutes)
5. Use the student worksheets to personalize the issue and reinforce concepts. (25 minutes)
6. Close the lesson. (1 minute)
7. Assign homework. (2 minutes)

Note: The teacher's script is indicated by italics. This script is meant to be a guide for teachers who might find it helpful.

Materials Needed

Classroom Materials: (1 per class)

- Transparency: *Alcohol and Other Drugs*
- Transparency: *Beer Ad*
- Overhead projector

Student Materials (1 per student):

- Worksheet: *Lily & Gino's Story* (front); *Lily, You've Got Mail* (back)
- Worksheet: *Eric's Story* (front); *Eric, You've Got Mail* (back)
- Individual homework: *Healthy Fun*
- Family homework: *Alcohol, Other Drugs, and HIV*
- Family homework: *Family Homework Letter & Confirmation Slip*

Preparation

- Arrange for overhead projector

Resources

Background Reading:

- HIV/AIDS: [Background Information for Educators](#)
- How to answer difficult questions: [Answering Difficult Questions](#)
- How to answer questions about controversial issues: [Values Question Protocol](#)

Websites:

- Health Educators Toolbox <http://www.metrokc.gov/health/apu/healthed>, (Public Health – Seattle & King County [PHSKC])
- HIV/AIDS Program <http://www.metrokc.gov/health/apu> (PHSKC)
- Family Planning Program <http://www.metrokc.gov/health/famplan> (PHSKC)

Phone Numbers:

- HIV/STD Hotline: (206) 205-7837 or (800) 678-1595 (PHSKC)
- HIV/STD Hotline: (800) 342-AIDS (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- Sex Information Line: (206) 328-7711 or (888) 307-9275 (Planned Parenthood of Western Washington)
- Your local Public Health Department

Activities

1. Set the stage by brainstorming the physical and emotional effects of alcohol and other drugs on the body. (7 minutes)

Show the *Alcohol & Other Drug* transparency.

I'm not looking for one specific answer, but turn to your neighbor and tell that person at least one way these things can affect a person. Remember to think about emotions (how they make people feel) and behaviors (how people act.)

Can I have a few volunteers to share what they talked about with their neighbor?

As students give responses, write them on the board. While most of these points are negative, it is important to acknowledge that adolescents perceive positive aspects of using alcohol and drugs as well. This helps build credibility. Later in the lesson, we will discuss healthier, less dangerous ways to meet these needs.

Possible answers include:

- High, light-headed
- Nauseous, dizzy, drowsy
- Depressed
- Silly
- Feel good
- Less shy or anxious
- Less concerned about privacy, values, responsibility, etc.
- More aggressive: fighting, shouting, using weapons, etc.
- Less cautious: driving when drunk, being in sexual situations, swimming at night, etc.
- More confident: talking to people that normally make them nervous, asking someone out on a date, etc.

2. Discuss the impact of alcohol and other drugs on decision-making and HIV risk. (5 minutes)

What does this have to do with getting HIV?

Possible answers include:

- People think less clearly.
- People don't make the same decisions they would if they were not using alcohol or other drugs.
- People often make decisions they later regret.

- **Alcohol and other drugs all increase the user's chances of getting HIV.**

If a person can't think clearly and make good decisions, they are more likely to take risks, such as using injection drugs and having sex. Using drugs and alcohol should not be used as an excuse to have unsafe sex. People who are drinking or using drugs can still choose abstinence or use condoms to protect themselves.

While all drugs and alcohol affect a person's ability to make decisions, using needles to inject drugs can actually transmit HIV infection. HIV is currently spreading fastest among people who use injection drugs and their partners.

3. Analyze an advertisement, focusing on the use of alcohol to meet social and emotional needs. (5 minutes)

Show *Beer Ad* transparency.

What is it about this ad that makes people want to buy the beer?

Possible answers include:

- The people are having fun.
- The people feel like they're fitting in.
- The people are hanging out with close friends.

Is it okay to want to have fun, to fit in and have friends? Sure. Everyone needs that. It's part of being human. The ad implies that the way to achieve that is with beer.

4. Generate a list of healthy, less dangerous alternatives to meeting these needs. (5 minutes)

Can you think of other less dangerous ways that people...(insert from brainstorm list above e.g. build friendships, fit in, have fun)?

Give students a chance to share their responses.

5. Use the *Stories* and *You've Got Mail* worksheets to personalize the issue and reinforce concepts. (25 minutes)

Hand out *Lily & Gino's Story* (front) and *Lily, You've Got Mail* (back). Have a student volunteer read *Lily & Gino's Story* aloud. Then, discuss each of the questions as a large group. Possible answers follow each question.

A. Why did Lily use alcohol and other drugs in this situation?

- As an excuse to have sex (although Lily can say, and even believe, that having sex with Gino was an accident)
- So she wouldn't really have to think about whether this was a good or "right" time for her to have sex
- To excuse her from having to talk with Gino about it first

- To make her feel less nervous about having sex

B. Exactly what risks did Lily take?

- Getting HIV or another Sexually Transmitted Disease
- Getting pregnant
- Getting talked about by Gino
- Feeling bad, guilty, scared
- Damaging her relationship with Gino
- Disappointing her family. [Note: If your class brings this up and seems to dwell on it, you might point out that communicating about problems can make a family closer. A young person who has lied or made a mistake can often recover their family's trust in time.]

C. Did her decision to have sex have any possible benefits?

- She might feel less left out with her friends.
- She might have satisfied her curiosity.
- She might have had a good time.
- Gino might want to see her more.

D. Were the possible benefits worth the risks, in your opinion?

- Most students will conclude that the risks were not worth the benefits.

E. Did Lily consider Gino's feelings about having sex?

- As far as we can tell, Lily didn't consider Gino's feelings.
- She encouraged him to drink and had sex with him. Based on what he said in the past, it doesn't look like he wanted to have sex.

F. What are some steps that Lily could take now?

- As soon as she can (but at least within the next three days), go to a clinic to get emergency contraception — a kind of birth control pill that prevents pregnancy if taken right away. To find a clinic or drug store that carries emergency contraception, Lily can call 1-888-NOT-2-LATE. [Note: If you've already done a birth control lesson, make sure this point is included. If not, this can be used as an opportunity to teach about emergency contraception.]
- If Lily doesn't use emergency contraception, she can get a pregnancy test in 2 weeks.
- Go to a clinic to get an STD checkup including an HIV antibody test. [Note: Lily can get a chlamydia test result in 7 days, but other STD's may take longer to show up. For example, it might take 6 months to get an accurate Hepatitis B test, and it will take about 3 months to learn if she got HIV. Ongoing check-ups are a good idea.]
- Get condoms and learn how to use them. (If appropriate for your school district, discuss correct condom use with your class. Use teacher reference sheet [Correct Condom Use](#) as a basis for the discussion.)

- Talk to Gino about what happened, how they are feeling, and whether or not they are going to have sex again.
- Talk over the situation with her family or other trusted adults.

Give people five minutes to complete *Lily, You've Got Mail* individually. Discuss student responses.

Hand out *Eric's Story* (front) and *Eric, You've Got Mail* (back). Have a student volunteer read *Eric's Story* aloud. Then, discuss each of the questions as a large group.

A. Why did Eric use alcohol and other drugs in this situation?

- We don't really know why Eric used alcohol and other drugs.
- Here are some possible reasons:
 - To feel good or get high. (Note that not all people feel good on drugs. Some drugs cause some people to feel pretty bad.)
 - To impress the older guys (peer pressure).
 - To do what he usually does for fun with his friends. It felt familiar.
 - To relieve boredom.
 - To fit in.
 - To relieve anxiety.
 - To escape from problems.

B. Exactly what risks did Eric take?

- Getting injured in a car accident, if he or a friend drove
- Getting in trouble with the police.
- Disappointing his family.
- Feeling bad, guilty, or scared.
- Getting HIV or hepatitis B or C infection.
- Becoming addicted to alcohol or other drugs.
- Making sexual decisions that he might regret later.

C. Did his decision have any possible benefits?

- He might have had a good time.
- He might feel less left out with his friends.
- He might have satisfied his curiosity.

D. Were the possible benefits worth the risks, in your opinion?

- Most students will conclude that they were not.

E. Eric is worried about HIV, what should he do about it?

- In 3 months go to a clinic to get an HIV antibody test. Getting tested right away won't tell him whether he got infected at the party. It takes time to make enough antibodies to show up on the test. [Note: in 6 months get tested for Hepatitis B & C.]

- Talk over the situation with his family or other trusted adults.

Give students five minutes to complete *Eric, You've Got Mail* individually. Discuss student responses.

6. Close the lesson. (1 minute)

You guys just gave some great advice to Lily and Eric. You told them how to take care of themselves and stay healthy, but still have fun. I hope you'll all follow your own good advice.

7. Assign homework. (2 minutes)

Individual Homework: *Healthy Fun*

Family Homework: *Alcohol, Other Drugs & HIV*

- Students who do the family homework will also need to take home *Lily & Gino's Story*, *Eric's Story*, and *Family Homework Letter & Confirmation Slip*.

A note about Family Homework:

It is the philosophy of the FLASH curriculum to encourage family communication. This is why every topic (although not every single lesson) includes a Family Homework Exercise. These exercises usually focus more on feelings and values than on content, although some involve reviewing that day's learning. The child does NOT report back on the content of those conversations. Instead, he or she returns a Family Homework Confirmation Slip, signed by the child and whatever adult has completed the exercise with the child. This may be a parent or guardian, a grandparent or aunt or uncle, a partner or friend of the parent or guardian, a family counselor, someone from the child's community of worship, or whomever else the child identifies as "family."

It is not our intention, however, to penalize young people who cannot do Family Homework. There may be many reasons. Perhaps a particular issue is too sensitive and either the child or the family prefers not to discuss it. Perhaps the parent(s) or guardian(s) work evenings, care for elderly relatives or for some other reason just can't make time to do homework together. Because some children cannot do Family Homework, we recommend that, whenever you assign FLASH homework, you always offer Individual Homework as an alternative through which a child could earn the same credit.